

REMARKS

I. Claim objections and amendments.

Claims 10-12 are objected to under 37 C.F.R. §1.75(c) as allegedly being in improper form. The Examiner alleges that claims 10-12 are improper multiple dependent claims which depend upon claim 9.

Applicants reply that claims 10-12 are in proper form and do not violate 37 C.F.R. §1.75(c). Claim 9 is a proper multiple dependent claim which depends upon any one of claims 1-8. Claim 10 is a proper dependent claim which depends upon claim 9, and claims 11 and 12 are proper dependent claims which depend upon claim 10. None of claims 10-12 are a multiple dependent claim depending directly or indirectly on claim 9. Accordingly, claims 10-12 are proper dependent claims, and withdrawal of the objection to claims 10-12 under 37 C.F.R. §1.75(c) is requested.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. Claim 1 has been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion and, therefore, withdrawal of the rejection under §112 is requested.

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1-12 remain pending. No new matter has been added by any amendment herein.

II. The claimed invention

The claimed invention is directed to a method for preparing an article by cold compaction molding. A high molecular weight polyethylene (HMW-PE) or an ultra-high molecular weight polyethylene (UHMW-PE) is treated with an inorganic acid scavenger, and the mixture is compacted to yield an article. Advantageously, the acid scavenger employed by the disclosed method removes residual free acid from the polyethylene without weakening the bonding properties of the polymer granules during cold compaction. As a result, the green strength of the obtained articles is significantly better than the green strength of articles prepared using additives such as metal soaps.

III. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by US 4,902,451 to Inoue ("Inoue").

Anticipation requires that each and every feature of the claimed invention be disclosed by a single prior art reference. The claimed invention expressly requires an inorganic acid scavenger which serves to remove residual free acid from the polyethylene without weakening the bonding properties of the polymer granules during cold compaction. The Examiner alleges that the ferric or ferrous oxide disclosed by Inoue is a metal acid scavenger. For the following reasons, Applicants submit that the ferric or ferrous oxide, or any other magnetic particles disclosed by Inoue, is not an acid scavenger in the sense contemplated by the claimed invention.

Inoue discloses a method of preparing a frictional material. According to Inoue, the frictional material is prepared by (a) mixing magnetic particles (**M**) with a resinous frictional substance (**P**) and (b) subjecting the mixture to an external magnetic field of a predetermined orientation while forming the mixture to yield the frictional material acquiring a frictional anisotropy. As disclosed in column 4, lines 9-15 of Inoue, the powerful magnetic orientation of the magnetic material **M** in the resinous polymeric material **P** provides the high frictional anisotropy. In the mixing stage, one or more further substances may be incorporated into the magnetic particles **M** (col. 2, lines 21-26). It appears that these optional substances, e.g., silicate minerals, may be added to dilute the magnetic material **M**.

Therefore, in view of the disclosure provided by Inoue, Applicants submit that the ferric or ferrous oxide, or any other magnetic particles **M** disclosed by Inoue, is not an acid scavenger. The Examiner has failed to identify where Inoue discloses or suggests that the magnetic particles **M** function to remove or neutralize residual free acids from the polymeric frictional material **P**. Accordingly, in the absence of further information supporting the Examiner's position, it is submitted that the magnetic particles **M** disclosed by Inoue are not acid scavengers in the sense contemplated by the claimed invention.

The claimed invention requires an inorganic acid scavenger and, for the foregoing reasons, Inoue does not disclose, either expressly or inherently, an inorganic acid scavenger. Thus, Inoue fails as an anticipatory reference. Withdrawal of the §102 rejection is requested.

IV. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 3, 4, and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Inoue. The Examiner alleges that Applicants' use of a metal oxide or silicate as an acid scavenger is obvious in view of Inoue's disclosure of a ferric or ferrous oxide.

Applicants submit that their comments in Section III above are applicable and, therefore, responsive to the rejection under §103(a). In brief, the ferric or ferrous oxide, or any other magnetic particles **M** disclosed by Inoue, does not suggest an acid scavenger which removes residual free acid from the polyethylene without weakening the bonding properties of the polymer granules during cold compaction. Rather, the powerful magnetic orientation of the magnetic material **M** in the resinous polymeric material **P** provides a high frictional anisotropy in the frictional material. Thus, the magnetic particles **M** of Inoue neither suggest the inorganic acid scavengers of the claimed invention nor their function as contemplated by the claimed invention.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 3, 4, and 7 under §103(a) is respectfully requested.

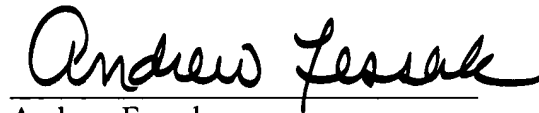
CONCLUSION

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1-12 remain pending. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-12 are in condition for allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

Authorization is hereby given to charge any fee which may be due in connection with this communication to Deposit Account 23-1703.

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Respectfully submitted,



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